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ABSTRACT

Evaluation of effective classroom teaching has long plagued school supervisors and administrators. Rating is generally done with criteria which varies according to the educational objectives of the rater as well as with his subjective impressions of the staff member being rated. Counselor Educators are faced with a similar problem when attempting to evaluate the practicum student's performance in the counseling situation. In 1965 Flanders published in an U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare monograph a system of quantifying selected verbal interaction between teacher and students whereby meaningful interaction between them in the classroom could be explored. This technique of interactional analysis lends itself to adaption for the evaluating the interaction of the counseling situation. By categorizing the possible responses in the counseling interview, recording them at timed intervals, and entering these data into a matrix, a comparison and analysis of the client and counselor responses are available. This paper is an explanation of an attempt to accomplish such a task. (Author)

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INTERACTIONAL ANALYSIS AND THE COUNSELING INTERVIEW

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INTERACTIONAL ANALYSIS AND THE COUNSELING INTERVIEW

Evaluation of effective classroom teaching has long plagued school supervisors and administrators. Rating is generally done with criteria which varies according to the educational objectives of the raters as well as with their subjective impressions of the teacher being rated. The reliability as well as the validity of such ratings is questionable.

Counselor educators are faced with a similar dilemma when attempting to evaluate the practicum student's performance in the counseling situation. By its very nature the practicum experience should be self-analytical and self-evaluative (Shertzer and Stone, 1966). Yet in rating counseling effectiveness as in rating teaching effectiveness, the very nature of the collected data is subjective and dependent upon the particular orientation of the supervisor doing the rating.

Soar (1964) contends that a more promising approach to evaluating effective teaching can be made through identifying and measuring dimensions within the classroom that facilitate student learning and change. Teacher-pupil communication is such a dimension. Understanding the responses of the client is also a dimension of communication. The problems involved in the communication process with the client are dominant problems in the counseling experience (Parker and Meek, 1967). Patterson (1968) notes that many students in current practicum procedures fall far short of offering a facilitative relationship of understanding, empathy, warmth, genuineness.

Flanders (1965) has developed a system of quantifying selected verbal interaction between teacher and students whereby the meaningful interaction

between them in the classroom can be explored. The use of Interactional Analysis by Flanders and Amidon (1962) has shown a positive correlation with pupil independence. If pupil achievement, attitude, and independence is related to teacher effectiveness as stated, then the Interactional Analysis system has been shown to be a reliable means of evaluating this effectiveness. As such, it should then lend itself to adaption for evaluating the effectiveness of the practicum student in the counseling situation.

A review of the steps involved in the Interactional Analysis process of Flanders is in order. Classroom verbal behavior is classified into ten categories all mutually exclusive, yet totally inclusive of all the verbal interaction occurring in the classroom. Using these categories a trained observer records every three seconds the category number of the verbal interaction he observes. In this manner the sequence of verbal behavior is captured and the type of verbal behavior that causes the following response to be elicited is indicated. In recording such a column of representative numbers of verbal behavior, the kind of response as to whether it is teacher or student dominant is also evident. These numbers can then be coupled into sequential pairs with the first number of each pair being the last number of the preceding pair. The pairs are then tabulated into a ten-by-ten matrix permitting the identification of categories of verbal interaction as observed for that period of time. Several aspects of interaction can be clearly seen in the matrix. The percentage and the kinds or categories of teacher and student talk can quickly be reckoned when columnar totals of category incidences are computed. Cross comparisons between categories of verbalization as to whether teacher talk is directly or indirectly influencing student talk can be made. All in all, the Interactional Analysis system can be a very personal evaluative technique for the teacher as well as being statistically verifiable

by research procedures.

In adapting the Interactional Analysis technique to the counseling interview, attention should first be directed toward developing categories of responses that may occur in an interview. This would imply a survey of verbal techniques used to develop the counseling relationship to which specific terms can be assigned. Shertzer and Stone (1968) quote categorized verbal techniques described by Bucheimer and Balogh that can elicit feeling, facilitate self-understanding, self-action as being; restatement, reflection, summarization, analysis, interpretation, direct question, reassurance, assurance, information giving, encouragement, specific suggestion, urging, cajoling, silence. Miller (1962) has categorized verbal leads in the counseling interview into thirty separate types, ranging from acceptance to threat and urging. Colby, as quoted by Bordin (1968), lists three types of interpretation of counselor responses as comparisons, clarifications, and wish-defense. Counselor attitudes are categorized by Porter (1950) as being evaluative, interpretative, supportive, probing, or understanding. Rogers (1951) cites Blocksma's use of Porter and Axline's test showing counseling responses classified by response techniques as moralizing, diagnosis, interpretation, support, reflection.

If the counselor response types along with other analogous terms as listed above were placed into a series of classifications inclusive of possible interview responses yet exclusive by category, they might be arranged as follows:

1. Understanding, Accepting
2. Reflecting, Restating, Clarifying
3. Interpreting, Summarizing

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

4. Answering, Explaining, Supporting, Reassuring, Informing

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

5. Probing, Questioning, Searching, Investigating

6. Predicing, Advising, Directing, Judging, Moralizing

7. Unawareness, Non-understanding, Squelch, Innocuous Statement, Irrelevant Response

Two additional categories representing whether the client's response is controlled by the counselor or is freely initiated, plus a category representing silence would complete a ten-category structure that can be adapted to the Interactional Analysis technique.

A look at the categories described above indicates that those responses listed in the first three classifications are more or less indirect in nature while those responses in categories four, five, and six would seem to involve the counselor on the direct level. A further exploration of the categories indicates that the counselor would tend to be subjective for the first three and tend to be more objective in four, five and six. Category seven indicates the counselor is 'out-of-touch' with client. The possibility of comparing the type of counselor response that elicits either type of client response is evident in addition to determining the frequencies of each category. There would be no value assigned to the numbers representing the different categories. They serve to identify the category for purposes of recording.

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Fig. 1

CATEGORIZING COUNSELING INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Directions: While you view the client and counselor responses of the counseling interview, record in column/s the number from the categories on the right side of the page that best represents your feelings as to the type of response being made. Begin your column with category 10 and end with category 10.

COUNSELOR RESPONSES	INDIRECT	1. Understanding, Accepting 2. Reflecting, Restating, Clarifying 3. Interpreting, Summarizing
	DIRECT	4. Answering, Explaining, Supporting, Reassuring, Informing 5. Probing, Questioning, Searching, Investigating 6. Predicting, Advising, Directing, Judging, Moralizing
		7. Unawareness, Non-understanding, Squelch, Innocuous Statement, Irrelevant Response
CLIENT RESPONSES		8. Client Answers 9. Client Initiates
		10. Silence

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Fig. 2

INTERACTIONAL MATRIX.

Directions: Record interview responses below by couplets (pairs). Arrange the recorded responses from Fig. 1 in couplets by combining each number with its succeeding number. The second number of each couplet will become the first number in the next couplet. The couplet is recorded in the appropriate grid by a checkmark representing the intersecting of the first and the last number of the couplet.

(Second Number of the Couplet)

(First Number of the Couplet)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	T
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
9											
0											
T											
%											

Field trials were designed and conducted to test the usability and the reliability of this proposed adaptation of Flanders' Interactional Analysis technique to the counseling interview.

Selected audio tape segments were presented to two different Counseling Theory classes at Western Kentucky University in Spring 1969 and in Spring 1970. These classes were comprised of graduate students in Counselor Education programs leading to a Master of Arts degree.

A short training period was conducted in each class wherein students were trained in the use of the instrument. (See Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). Practice tape segments were played and stopped every five seconds at which interval the student would enumerate the category of response that best represented the speech content of the interview at that given instant. Discussion of each response category was permitted until there was general agreement among the students as to definition. Examples were presented orally by the experimenter and were also identified on the practicum tapes. The actual data collection was then begun.

Test audio tapes were presented to each class; stopped at five-second intervals in order that categories of speech could be recorded in a time space of two seconds; and were continued for a total lapsed time of seven minutes. Seven minutes were arbitrarily adopted in order to have a representative recording of five actual minutes of counseling interview conversation. This raw data was then placed in the matrix (Fig. 2) and totaled by categories.

The usability of this device was evident in the short training time necessary for it to be used (15-20 minutes); the ease with which the theme and procedures were grasped by the students collecting the data; the absence of extended questioning, consternation, or reticence upon the parts of the students performing the data collection function. The fact that this procedure

could be initiated at any point in the counseling interview furthers its usability.

An instrument is reliable to the extent that responses remain nearly the same in repeated use. There are three distinct possibilities of establishing instrument reliability: test-retest with the same form, the use of second equivalent form, or the division of the instrument into two or more equivalent fractions ofttimes refe-red to as "split-halves" method. The results in each of these possibilities are then compared statistically to establish instrument reliability.

In this study of interaction in the counseling interview the use of audio tapes for data collection purposes involved problems of establishing five-second intervals for recording speech categories. This could not be accomplished during the actual recording session without sophisticated electronic equipment for silently imprinting metronomic signals. Consequently, the "split-halves" approach to reliability testing lent itself to this study.

The data from the Spring 1969 group were randomly divided into two equal parts as were the data of the Spring 1970 group. This permitted comparison within each group by the "split halves" method for reliability purposes. The total responses for each category of each "split-halves" group were then converted into a Mean for that category and these Means were converted into percentages. (See Tables 1 and 2). This permitted the use of Scott's coefficient of reliability as presented by Flanders in his original work in the areas of interactional analysis.

The Scott coefficient is calculated using the following formula:

$$= \frac{P_o - P_e}{100 - P_e}$$

TABLE 2

RESPONSE PERCENTAGE MEANS BY CATEGORIES

FOR SPRING-1970 SAMPLE

Category	Split-Halves Group A	Split-Halves Group B	Difference (A - B)	Ave. (A+B) Squared
1	2.8	2.4	0.4	0.0676
2	1.9	0.9	1.0	0.0196
3	2.5	2.7	0.2	0.0676
4	6.0	6.0	0.0	0.3600
5	3.3	2.9	0.4	0.0961
6	1.6	1.5	0.1	0.0240
7	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0004
8	6.6	6.3	0.3	0.4060
9	67.1	68.2	1.1	45.7652
10	7.9	9.2	1.3	0.7310
			5.2	47.5475

$$\hat{\pi} = \frac{P_o - P_e}{100 - P_e}$$

$$\hat{\pi} = \frac{(100 - 5.2) - 47.5475}{100 - 47.5475}$$

$$\hat{\pi} = 0.9008$$

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2	1.9	0.9	1.0	0.0196
3	2.5	2.7	0.2	0.0676
4	6.0	6.0	0.0	0.3600
5	3.3	2.9	0.4	0.0961
6	1.6	1.5	0.1	0.0240
7	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0004
8	6.6	6.3	0.3	0.4050
9	67.1	68.2	1.1	45.7652
10	7.9	9.2	1.3	0.7310
			5.2	47.5475

$$\pi = \frac{P_o - P_e}{100 - P_e}$$

$$\pi = \frac{(100 - 5.2) - 47.5475}{100 - 47.5475}$$

$$\pi = 0.9008$$

where P_o is the difference between perfect agreement (100%) and the summed differences of percentages of disagreement in all categories, and P_e is the square of the averages of the agreement by both groups in each category. The Scott coefficient then is the ratio of the amount of true agreement to the difference of chance agreement from a ratio of one or perfect agreement. This is similar to chi-square but differs in that it takes into consideration the interaction or sequence of category ratings. The reader is referred to the referenced Flanders' monograph for a more detailed explanation of this coefficient.

The following reliability coefficients between "split-halves" of the Spring 1969 group and for the Spring 1970 group were established:

Spring - 1969 = 0.91

Spring - 1970 = 0.90

These coefficients are in close agreement and being at the 0.9 levels would indicate a reasonably high level of reliability for the instrument. Flanders in establishing his interactional analysis categories of verbal behaviors of teachers reported reliability coefficients as low as 0.88. The data presented here would support the contention that verbal behavior in the counseling interview can be reliably categoriezed with this technique.

In summary, Flanders' technique for interactional analysis permits the study of verbal responses in a communication interchange. As such it readily lends itself to the study of responses in the counseling interview. Types of responses can be categorized for the counselor and for the client which will permit the comparison of counselor response eliciting kind of client response. Percentages of total responses in each category can be compared to the overall number of responses recorded to indicate amount of interview conversation being limited to each category.

The complete ten categories would appear as:

1. Understanding, Accepting
2. Reflecting, Restating, Clarifying
3. Interpreting, Summarizing
4. Answering, Explaining, Supporting, Reassuring, Informing
5. Probing, Questioning, Searching, Investigating
6. Predicing, Advising, Directing, Judging, Moralizing
7. Unawareness, Non-understanding, Squelch, Innocuous Statement, Irrelevant Response
8. Client Answers
9. Client Initiates
10. Silence

Further it may be assumed that the matrices used to record these categories of verbal interview behaviors can be utilized through comparative studies in establishing counselor effectiveness--a decided need for counselor training institutions.

There has been little research into the supervision of the counseling practicum (Cash and Munger, 1966). As the practicum experience is increasingly becoming the major vehicle for counselor training (Shertzer and Stone, 1966) there is need for study in this important area of counselor education. An adaptation of the Interactional Analysis technique would provide a method by which verifiable research can be accomplished in this area.

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